

[Interview with Vito Cacciola #54]

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Interview

with

Vito Cacciola

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by

Merton R. Lovett

. . .

“As well as remembered”

Interview with Vito Cacciola

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(from memory)

“So, you plana to go fishing, Mr. Lovett. My gracious! To fish giva me de most pleasure, to catcha de eels is mucha fun.

“Eels tasta better as any other fish. Does you not thinka so?

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"You finda it difficult to skina them. Hah! Hah! You does not knowa how. I can skina de eel faster as I can talka about it. I holda him so. I cuta with de knive here. Viva! He is quickly uncloth-ed.

"Sure I catcha them in this country. I geta many one time from de pond in Boxford.

"You will taka me fishing Mr. Lovett? My Jingo, I thanka you much. It will be de great pleasure. When shall we go?

"Not till de water geta warm enough? I hope that will be soon. I does not know that eels liva in de mud until June.

"You must permita me to diga de worms. I can geta you big, fata ones. Besides I will taka de nice lunch. Does you lika chicken? I can also cooka de eel on de bumfire. With de white wine it tasta sweeter as turkey.

"When can I spare de time? Any day willa do. I can leava do shop with Tony for a few hours. Which day can you leava your work?

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"What'. You hava no work? Does you not calla writing de history work?

"Oh, Mr. Lovett, I is [much?] sorry you losa de job. I thinka at first that you mak-ed jokes.

"My gracious! My heart it is sad. Why did de President discharge you?

"If de President did not steala your job, you must maka to him complaint. Who is de crooka what robb-ed you?

"You does not know? It was de rule. Whata you mean?

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"It is de rule most unfair. Why shoulda you daughter taka your family to her home and supporta them? By Jingo, I knowa de senator, Mr. Lodge, I will speaka to him. He will giva somebodys punishment and geta your job back.

"My! My! So you will not maka de fight. I thinka you maka de mistake.

"Yes de Bible does saya that, but it also tella us to taka from sinners de tooth for de tooth and de eye for de eye. If peoples smite a my cheek, I smite a them back and more hard.

"Well, I think, you will geta de job Mr. Lovett. You has gota de education. You has been gooda citizen. If I need-ed de helper I would giva you job.

"Oh, you is not old. By living so long you has learna much. My, I am more older than you, but I ama more smart than de young man.

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"Did de other peoples losa their jobs?

"You hopa not. Since they is good friends to you and well behave-ed, I hopa not too.

"I never did believe that de workers for W.P.A. was de skunka. My brother Peter, he is a marvelous, but he must worka there.

"I thinks all good peoples should hava jobs. In Italy Mussolini doa that. He runa de country with deficiency. Oh! thats what I mean-ed efficiency. He saya efficiency is necessary. De cobbler musta have it. De shoe manufacturer musta have it. Do government needa it.

"You has a many friends in de church. Somebodys there will helpa you.

"What, you does not thinka so? Then what gooda is de church. I thinka de good Christians should helpa each other. De Jews doa that.

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"I too hava known many disrepointments. I praya much and worka hard. De good Lord has given to me de good conscience and success.

"When I come-ed first to this country, I feela discourag-ed. I have no friends. One day I sita on bench in de Boston Common. I grieve for de home in Sicily. Pretty soon some young men's sita down too. I does not knowa if they is Irish, or French or Americans, but they is tougha guys. I 4 weara de rag-ed clothes. I speaka no English. They mak-ed desulting remarks. They pusha me. They driva me from de park. I wisha I was dead.

"Yes, but soon I meeta a wonderful man. He treata me like de gentleman. He teach-ed me American. He discovers for me de Bible. He was a peacha of man. I geta courage once more.

"Perhaps for you it will also prova de darkness before de morning. I hope so.

"Sure we will fisha and forgeta our fears. I lika fishing betta as hunting.

"Yes, I hunta when I was de young man, thirty years ago. I hava de gun. To loada it I shova in powder with long stick.

"No. I have no gun today. It is burst-ed. I almost lose my life one time.

"Sure, I tella you. I was hunta for rabbit. Before I starta, I buya some new powder. It was not de black powder, but some justa invent-ed. They called it de smokeless. It is stronger as dinimite.

"You guess-ed it. I pusha some of de new powder in de gun. Bye and bye I seea de rabbit. He was sita up under de pine tree. He was mosta beautiful but also desulting. De little scampa shaka his nose and de whiskers lika this.

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"By Jingo, I saya, I will baka your goose. I will puta you in de stew. Then I aim-ed de gun so. I pulla de trigger. Bang!

My, it wasa terrible, Mr. Lovett. I sit a down fast. I losa for a minute de senses. When I could seea, I looka up and what did I find?

"In my hands I hava only de rear end of de gun. De pipe - yes de barrell - it is gone. My shoulder it is sore. My ear it is cut. I bleeda like de pig.

"Was I scar-ed. I was so scar-ed I trembla, Mr. Lovett. I could not standa or walka for long time. But thank de good Lord I was sav-ed. It was de miracle.

"Did I shoota that rabbit? No he was devisable. He runa away fast.

"Was de rabbit scar-ed? Hah! Hah! Hah! I thinka he was so scar-ed that he weta his pants.